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AMERICAN EXPANSION as an HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

Paper read before the

AMERICAN SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION,

at Saratoga, September 6, 1899,

by

Samuel L. ^{Longstrech}
Parrish.

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— BY —

SAMUEL L. PARRISH.

American Expansion Considered as an Historical Evolution.

In the fierce current of events which sweeps along the nations to the fulfillment of their destiny, the eddies, and even the whirlpools, must be recognized as incident only to the current itself.

There are those who call the battle of Manila an "accident" and fail to comprehend that Manila was but the logical sequence of four centuries of antecedent conditions to be readily traced upon the page of history.

It is my intention then to invite you to consider, in merest outline, three historical periods bearing directly upon the situation that we, the people of the United States, find ourselves confronted with, at the end of the nineteenth century, in our relations with the rest of the world.

First—The political condition of Europe at the end of the fifteenth century and the relations of the European powers toward each other at that time.

Manila Dec. 5-15-95

Second—The relations of the European Powers to the western hemisphere toward the end of the eighteenth century.

Third—The relations of the United States of America to Europe and the rest of the world at the end of the nineteenth century.

If, in considering the first period, we look over the map of Europe at the end of the fifteenth century, just prior to the discovery of America, we find, roughly speaking, the following conditions, beginning with Spain in the southwest corner and then swinging around the circle to the point of beginning.

For seven hundred years Spain had been surely coming to her own again. During all that time the Arab invaders of the eighth century had been slowly driven back, the struggle leaving its impress, both for good and evil, upon the Spanish character.

Now the cross and now the crescent had been in the ascendant, but in 1492, the exact date of the discovery of America, Moorish dominion ceased on Spanish soil and the cross floated triumphant from the Pyrenees to the Straits of Gibraltar. Thenceforward Spain enters upon her career as a consolidated kingdom and maritime world power. Thus we leave her for the moment, to consider the condition of Italy.

In the fifteenth century, Italy had been, ever since the fall of the Roman Empire a thousand years before, the prey of external foes and of internal dissension.

Once mistress of the world, ruling with imperial sway the whole basin of the Mediterranean and extending far inland on every side to the furthest confines of the civilization of which she herself was at once the author and interpreter, she was not now even mistress of herself.

Rent into a dozen fragments, Italy was simply a congeries of small kingdoms, petty principalities and powers, papal states, grandduchies and obligarchic republics, forever quarreling one with the other. Of great men there were enough to adorn an empire, but in the world drama about to open, Italy counted for nothing as a political factor.

Proceeding further to the east, we come to southeastern Europe. Here we find conditions that would indeed be startling did they exist to-day.

The Moslem, about to be driven forever from southwestern Europe, had made his appearance, like harlequin in the pantomime, in the southeast, and the Christian powers had all, and more, than they could do to hold in check the rising tide of Mohammedanism.

Russia, as such, did not exist and the inhabitants of that section of Europe, with the Tartar hordes on one side and the Turks on the other, found themselves between the devil and the deep sea.

The low order of their own civilization, and their lack of sea power, debarred them from taking any active part in the great events now looming on the political horizon. Retracing our steps towards the west and north, we now come to Central Europe.

Here again Italian conditions prevailed, for the Holy Roman Empire, the shadowy legacy of Charlemagne, was already in the state described later by Voltaire, for it was neither Holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire, exercising but a feeble authority over the disintegrated mass of states and cities and temporal and spiritual lords paramount of principalities. What foreign commerce existed was to be found for the most part in the hands of the Hanseatic League, a body without imperial aspirations, and asking only to be let alone, and to be allowed to peacefully follow its gainful pursuits in its own way without interference.

Such real authority as existed in the Empire was about to be allied to Spain, thus increasing her power and prestige in her relations toward the rest of the world. In the fifteenth century, there was in Central Europe no progressive, enlightened, consolidated empire like that of Germany to-day.

In our western progress, we next come to France. Here the conditions change and, approaching the point of our departure, we find the general political situation broadly resembling that of Spain. Built upon the foundations of feudalism, the genius of her people, combined with that of their rulers, had made of France a fair kingdom, rich, homogeneous, and powerful, ready to take an active

part in the struggle about to begin, and from her position as a maritime power, prepared to do so in an effective manner.

Now crossing the channel, we come to a country which we, as Americans, should never approach, either actually or in contemplation, except with a feeling of kinship, for however bitter at times may have been our contentions, no broad minded American, whatever his antecedent nationality, can ever regard England in any other light than as at least our political fatherland. Right royally as America has welcomed the Caucasian emigrant from every land, and important to our growth as have been these foreign accessions, it is nevertheless upon the foundation of the English idea of political, personal, and religious liberty that our own fair structure rests. At the end of the fifteenth century, then, England too was awakening to the new life about to dawn upon mankind.

The distracting Wars of the Roses had ceased and an astute sovereign, in the person of Henry VII, sat in peace upon the English throne ready to recognize and take advantage of the changed conditions resulting from the discovery of America, of gunpowder and printing. With many of the qualities of a great ruler, Henry had too the commercial instinct, and may be properly regarded as the father of the English navy and merchant marine. What this navy accomplished against Spain nearly a hundred years later, in the time of Henry's grand-daughter, needs hardly to be recalled.

The above bare outline of European conditions discloses then the fact that at the end of the fifteenth century, there were in the world but three civilized, consolidated, maritime nations, ready and eager to contend for the prize about to be set before them through the genius of an Italian*

*For the purposes of this short paper, and to avoid confusion, I shall consider Holland, though later in the field, as part of England, and Portugal as part of Spain. The Dutch character and theory and practice of colonization were for all essential purposes the same as those of England, while the same may be said of the relations of Portugal toward Spain, so far as those relations bear upon the progress and development of civilization in the new world. What the republic of Holland (though administered under monarchical forms,) has since so wonderfully accomplished in the way of the successful ruling of an inferior race can best be studied in the history of Java. If six or seven millions of Hollanders can bring peace and prosperity to about thirty millions of Javanese, I submit that eighty millions of Americans ought not to shrink from a similar task over against about eight millions of Filipinos.

It was then to be a struggle to the death between the
 → Anglo-Saxon and the Latin, with the Gaul sandwiched in between.

And now in the beginning of the sixteenth century, the great world drama opens, the issue fraught with momentous consequences for untold generations to come.

Spain was first in the field, and, backed by the vast resources of a great Empire, kept so far in the lead for the next hundred and fifty years, that France and little England were almost lost sight of, at least so far as actual territorial acquisition and profitable commerce were concerned.

Coming to the second period, let us now consider the position of the three powers just after the middle of the eighteenth century, following the conclusion of the Seven Years War.

Spain and Portugal between them were still the undisputed rulers, so far as circumstances permitted, of the whole of South America, Central America, Mexico, and that vast region west of the Mississippi and south of Georgia, which now forms so fair a part of the domain of the United States

The North American Colonies, practically confined to the region east of the Alleghenies, as well as British North America, were English territory. The great West and Northwest, now the granary of the world, was No Man's Land. The Indian and the buffalo roamed at will.

It was to require yet another generation to finally settle the question of actual ownership, and two or three to reduce that ownership to profitable possession. Time enough to dispute when there was something tangible to dispute about.

Little perhaps as it may have been appreciated at the time, it may now be seen that the consequences of the Seven Years War, as determining the trend of antagonistic forms of progress over a vast area, were perhaps the most momentous in history,

France had dreamed of an Empire comprising the whole of North America west of the Alleghenies, and later perhaps even also to the east. If a Norman duke could

conquer old England, why not a French king New England.

Beginning with Canada and stretching over to the Mississippi, then down the great river to Louisiana, she felt sure that time alone would be requisite to drive Spain from North America.

Already Spain was in a state of industrial collapse, largely the result of the fanatical and short-sighted policy of a hundred and fifty years earlier, when the laborious and peaceable Moriscoes, representing the skilled labor of Spain, were driven from the country.

The astute statesmen of France must have foreseen that the disintegration of the Spanish colonies was at hand. But the fall of Quebec was the death knell of France in the new world. A fitful reappearance, the result of Napoleonic complications, just antecedent to our Louisiana purchase, was her last expiring breath.

From becoming a dominating factor in North and South America and ultimate controller of the destinies of millions, this competitor for the prize of Columbus shrivelled, as with the touch of a magician's wand, into the possession of Martinique. The curtain is rung down on France, and England, and Spain, the Anglo Saxon and the Latin, Lord Salisbury's living and dying nations, stand facing each other alone in the western hemisphere. The sudden and grotesque reappearance and disappearance of France in Mexico at the time of our Civil War, that imbecile attempt of the third Napoleon to turn back the page of history, can be regarded only in the light of affording food for the laughter of gods and men.

Coming now to the third period, let us consider the development of the Americas in the present century.

The intolerable methods of Spain and Portugal have led to the inevitable result.

Colony after colony has revolted and here within our own time Spain and Portugal have followed in the footsteps of France. The parallel, however, is not complete, for whereas the possessions of France fell to an enlightened power, capable of dealing with a new situation and of conferring upon the inhabitants of the conquered territory the blessings of civilization regulated by orderly government,

the revolted Spanish colonies were left to their own feeble devices. Fitful and uncertain despotisms and oligarchies, masquerading under republican forms, have hardly been an improvement upon the old order.

The Central and South American situation was moreover complicated, and will doubtless for untold generations so remain, by the existence of a vastly preponderating aboriginal population incapable of self government.

Unlike our North American Indian, this population is too peaceable and too much adapted to its tropical and sub-tropical environment to permit of evolution by elimination. This phase I shall consider later on.

Some years after the successful revolt of Mexico against Spain in the beginning of this century, occurred our own logical and inevitable Mexican war. Unjust as that war was, under the narrower theory of international obligation, it but fulfilled the requirements of the dangerous but necessary doctrine of the "higher law." "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken little that he hath." In other words, nations are the trustees of civilization. If they fail to make proper use of their opportunities, others better qualified will take their places. Such is the law of progress. The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was but the relentless execution of this law. I know of none to-day who advocate the return of California to Mexico upon the ground of the injustice of its original acquisition.

In the middle of this century then the United States fell heir, as residuary legatee, to the great possessions of Spain in the temperate zone of North America, and the curtain falls upon another act in the world drama that is being played before our eyes.

Our domain now extends from the Great Lakes to the Gulf, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the fairest portion of the earth's surface, equalled, if at all only by Europe, the mother of that Aryan civilization about to encircle the globe with its dominating influence.

At the end of the nineteenth century the struggle of four hundred years has been accomplished in the western hemisphere, and the English speaking race, now at one in its aims, reigns triumphant, embracing, for the practical

purposes of the future, Central and South America, as well as the territory in actual possession.

→ The battle of Manila has not changed, but only broadened the scope of the Monroe Doctrine.

European nations have not, and will not, assume to dictate the policies of Mexico and the South American so called republics as the result of the expansion of our domain in the East.

I have up to this point traced, necessarily only in barest outline, the conflict of the European powers for the control of the Americas.

The picture is only complete when we contemplate the work done by the other great branch of our race in Africa, Australia, India and Egypt.

And now with the opening of the twentieth century the scene changes.

The domination of the heretofore unoccupied temperate zones of the earth, including a great area in the East, having been settled, another momentous problem comes to the front, the result of the progress of industrial civilization.

If you will take any carefully compiled book of international statistics and make a comparative table of the commerce of the world, you will, unless previously informed, be astonished at the part played by the tropics in furnishing those things requisite and necessary to sustain the industries of the temperate zone.

With the spread of industrialism, the result of man's increased dominion over nature, following upon the mechanical inventions of a mechanical age, tropical products have suddenly assumed an importance but little anticipated even fifty years ago.

With the sudden shrinkage of the world as the result of the improved means of intercommunication, far off Cathay becomes tributary to our industrial empire, and just what this means in the future can best be appreciated by the consideration of the practical certainties connected with the increase of our own population.

At the beginning of this century the United States contained, approximately, say five millions of people. In a hundred years the five have increased to eighty millions. Upon the same ratio of increase the end of the next cen-

tury would see thirteen hundreds of millions of people in the United States alone. Obviously such a result, for many reasons, is impossible. Take the ratio of increase for the future however as only about one-fifth that of the past and we still have a population of nearly three hundred millions in the United States in the time of the children of those now living. So philosophical an historian and conservative an observer of current events as Mr. John Fiske in his essay on "Manifest Destiny" puts the number as between five and six hundred millions.

Dr. S. H. Pritchett, Superintendent of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, in an interesting comparative table, puts it at 385,860,000. Europe to-day, with a sustaining power not much exceeding that of the United States, and with Canada included, much less, comfortably supports over three hundred millions, and the population of the world is not only increasing, but also rapidly tending toward equalization, the result of cheap methods of intercommunication.

Three hundred millions of American citizens, speaking the same language and governed by the same law dwarfs any aggregate heretofore contemplated.

The Roman Empire, at the time of its greatest extent, is supposed to have contained about one hundred and twenty-five millions of people, and was ultimately and logically crushed under its own weight, aided in its downfall by our forefathers, the outside barbarians, in whose hands rested, from the fifth century on, for many centuries, the physical force of the world. Happily all this is changed, for ever since war became a science, the Titan offspring of the brain of man at work in the laboratory and the machine shop, the sceptre of physical force has passed into the hands of civilization. Genseric and Attila, Genghis Khan, and Timour the Tartar are nightmares, not warnings. (The "yellow peril" does not exist. ←

But note now the other differences. Rome was a congeries of civilized, semi-civilized and semi-barbarous states united by no common bond except the supremacy of Roman law, (modified to suit national customs), backed by the mercenary legions.

Pro-consuls exercised despotic sway in far distant

provinces, weeks away from home communication.

Rome was without representative government, practically the invention, through centuries of trial and tribulation, of the English speaking race. The printing press, public schools and general education, making possible public opinion, with its effect upon officials and the home government, were unknown to Rome: In other words, all the powerful machinery of intelligent and responsible modern government was unknown.

Verres in Sicily two thousand years ago, and Lord Curzon in India to day represent the progress of a naturally dominant race in the art of governing a subject province. Compare their methods and you have the secret of the future government of the outside world.

What then are my conclusions in regard to the duty of the people of the United States to-day?

Statesmen, though alive to the responsibilities of the present, are unworthy the name unless they look reasonably far into the future. They must build their foundations deep if they would support the inevitable political skyscraper of the next generation.- The rickety old three story office building of fifty years ago, without elevator or telephone service, compared with the modern twenty five story structure affords but a feeble contrast to the change that has come over the world at large in the same period of time.

Three hundred millions of active, commercially aggressive, and industrious American citizens cannot be bottled up on this continent. The inhabitants of the tropics never have and never will, unaided, develop orderly self government of a character to enable them to make the most out of their possessions in the interest of the rising tide of industrialism, ever increasingly requiring, with increase of population, economy of production.

Shrink as we may from the task, the swift current of events has driven the United States into the forefront of the world's battle for racial and commercial supremacy.

The Philippines are but the entering wedge. As the great Pacific power of the near future we must sooner or later bring China under our paramount influence. The

longer we postpone the initiatory steps the greater will be the sacrifice required of us to obtain a foothold.

The ultimate conflict will be between the autocratic idea of government represented by Russia and the democratic idea represented by England and America.

Even as applied to the domination of inferior races the Englishman in India is a more attractive spectacle than the Russian in Siberia and China.

The present cordiality of sentiment between England and America represents a recognition of this fact. Germany, France and the other European, and even Asiatic powers, will exert their fluctuating influence from time to time upon the conflict as may seem best to them in their own interest at the moment. But in the coming grand struggle for world dominion they will exercise only an incidental and not ultimately dominating influence. Their limitations are set by their incapacity for expansion on a great scale, combined with the awkward necessity of protecting their own territory from inter-European aggression. England, Russia and the United States already own more than half the earth's surface. Small bodies gravitate toward the larger and not toward each other. The highly trained English and Continental statesmen, accustomed from their youth up to the consideration of world problems and backed by the experience of centuries of inherited diplomacy are much keener than our own in appreciating all these points.

Germany is too late in the race. Had she been a consolidated maritime kingdom in the fifteenth century, the map of the world would not be what it is to day.

France is in decadence. The possession of Sahara and all the deserts of tropical Africa, with Madagascar and a piece of malarial Asia thrown in, cannot save her in the struggle.

In the great consolidated world of one or two hundred years hence, the relations of France and Germany to that world will be those of Belgium and Holland to the Europe of to day. The three things that must increasingly determine the destinies of nations are, extent of territory, capacity to sustain population, and the character of the people.

In the United States we have a combination never be-

fore dreamed of, much less on the eve of accomplishment. If population and territory were alone requisite, then China would be great. If the character of the people were alone to count, then Holland would be a world power. But the North America of a hundred years hence will be a greater than China populated by men at least the equals in character and accomplishment of the Dutch.

→ In conclusion then, I maintain that we cannot shirk our duties and responsibilities. The English speaking race } has at last proved itself the masterful and dominant race } of the world and must control the tropics as it already practically controls the temperate zone, for the development of the two must in the future, ever increasingly, go hand in hand. For the United States to falter or turn back now would be a crime against civilization and entail ↗ upon the next generation a duty properly belonging to this.

In the great crises of our national life the instinct of the people always has been, and, while we retain our national character, always will be, a far safer guide than the sometimes learned, and often timid arguments of the cultivated few. This thought gave Lincoln strength in his darkest hour of trial.

In our late civil war, the highest and most respectable legal talent was not wanting to show that if the war could not be conducted under the Constitution it should not be conducted at all. As that war was brought to a successful conclusion, and one too ultimately satisfactory to both sides, so will our colonial possessions finally adjust themselves to their environment.

Many will be the blunders committed, deep from time to time may be our humiliation, and bitter will be our experience, but upon the successful solution by the American people of the problems incident to expansion now set before them must depend the future progress of the world.

The honest and intelligent domination of the inferior ↙ races is the task set before us. The sobering influence incident to the responsibilities and anxieties of a similar task, successfully accomplished, has distinctly improved the English national character in the past hundred years.

Let our inspiration come then from the contemplation and emulation of England in India and Egypt and Holland in Java. The difficulties of our perplexing negro and other problems will be neither increased nor diminished by a manful attempt to solve the greater problem of the East.

Lust of power for the sake of its willful exercise never has been, and never will be, a characteristic of the American people. An honest desire of the vast majority to do the right as God gives them to see the right always has been, and will continue to be, the guiding principle of a great people constituting, if you will, an empire, but an empire composed of active, intelligent, industrious, self-governing citizens the like of which has never been known, and upon which rests the hope of the world.

I know that in the busy world of to day, classical comparisons are somewhat out of date, and yet it may not be inappropriate to recall to mind that nineteen hundred years ago three men, Roman citizens, divided the world among them. Antony, Lepidus and Octavius. Lepidus took Northern Africa and Spain, Antony took Egypt and the East, and Octavius took Italy and the rest of the world. The lives of these men, their hopes, their fears, their ambitions, (and I may add their hatreds and their loves) have been depicted, not only in the history of the time, but in the rich imagery of Shakespeare's play of "Antony and Cleopatra". But it was not many years before Octavius, by force of arms, became Caesar Augustus, sole ruler of the world. And then it was that the gates of the temple of Janus were closed, which signified, under the Roman law and custom, that war had ceased and that universal peace reigned throughout the Empire. And then too it was that the Prince of Peace was born.

And so, as I look into the future, I see again the world divided into three, but this time it will be three nations, and not three individuals, which will divide the world among them, if not in actual territorial division, at least in dominating political influence. And those three nations will be, in fact are, named in the inverse order of their ultimate political importance, first, Russia, that grim spectre of the North that seeks to enfold in her chill embrace the des-

tinies of the world. Second, Great Britain and her colonies, a vast and magnificent federated empire that will be standing for stability and order, and third and last, the United States of America. And the last shall be first.

And as I seek to draw aside the veil still more and gaze still further into the great hall of time, peering down through the corridors of the centuries, I see again Cæsar Augustus, sole ruler of the world. But this time it will not be a single individual. But Cæsar Augustus, sole ruler of the world, will be the imperial democracies of the English speaking race ruling with directing mind, and guiding with sympathetic outstretched hand, a Christian world bound together by the iron bands of order, of justice, and of peace.

And this is no idle dream, for you yourselves have seen the beginnings of these iron bands forged in the fire and smoke of battle before your very eyes within the year last past, for the guns of Dewey's and of Sampson's fleets were but the instruments of progress in the hands of God.



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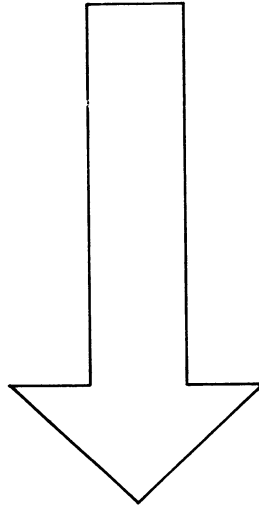
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